

TED HARDY, Bishop's Stortford manager, has enough troubles of his own if rumours on the "grapevine" are correct. But the blunt-speaking Hardy has come out strongly against the spate of bookings suffered by Clapton's players.

"We played them earlier in the season and they had two booked," said Hardy. "I have also watched them twice and they had five cautions in those two games. In my mind only one of them was justified."

Hardy hints that the blame lies with the Clapton management for a lack of discipline, since the majority of bookings have followed dissent or hand ball — Vinnie Scarfe and John Tone being the chief offenders.

"Don't forget I had Vinnie Scarfe with me at Dagenham for nearly six months. In fact, he was substitute when we played Enfield in the Amateur Cup final four years ago and he never had his name taken once," added Hardy.

"John Tone, who has had three bookings, was with me all last season and he never got into any trouble at all.

"George Dudley was at Dagenham for years before going to Clapton and in his four years with me he never got one booking. Now even he has had his name taken."

Bishop's Stortford, winners of the last year's final Amateur Cup, may not take part in the Barassi Trophy this season — the annual two legged affair between the Italian and English Amateur Cup winners.

Italian club, U S Meranese, which is near Venice, want to play their home leg on a Saturday. But due to travel complications this would leave Bishop's Stortford with a bill of around £2,000 — nearly their total share from Wembley.

"This will put the fares up by nearly £12 a head," said secretary, Brian Bayford, before he announced his resignation over the weekend. "We will have to go from London Airport instead of Stanstead.

"Then flight will only be to Milan, which means we have a 130 mile bus trip to the ground. You can say plans to play the game have been temporarily suspended."

Stortford recently released three players who have been snapped up by other clubs. Ray Coombe has joined Hendon, John Payne has gone to Harlow and Paul Scott to Ilford. All were members of their successful Wembley squad.

The walkout at Bromley con-

Alan Gane joins City

tinues. Last month manager, Danny Murphy, trainer Ray Bailey and six players quit, now skipper John Rains has left and defender John Mears is also expected to go.

Bromley expect to appoint a new manager this week and Alan Basham, could be the surprise packet. Basham quit on November 19 last year when Eddie Firmani was made team manager. Basham turned down the chance to stay as joint manager or assistant. Also on the short list is Brian Kinsey, for the former Charlton player.

Finchley celebrate their centenary this season and are holding a special dinner next Wednesday. Last week Sir Stanley Rous, the former chairman of F.I.F.A., presented them with an inscribed Vellum from the F.A.

Hayes are favourites to sign Peter Gelson, the centre back given a free by Brentford. Gelson spent 15 years at Griffin Park and made over 450 Football League appearances. "Several clubs have been in touch with me," said Gelson. "But I am in no hurry. I have to find a job first. Football has been my life but now it will have to take second place."

Hitchin have given up hope of signing Lou Adams, Stevenage Athletic's leading scorer last season. Adams has recently returned after four months playing in New Zealand and has had talks with Hitchin manager Brian Williams. But it now looks as if he will sign for Barrie Fry at Dunstable.

George Curtis, the former Stevenage and Hitchin coach and one-time Arsenal defender, has been seriously injured in a car crash. George, who was Norway's national coach, broke

both legs and damaged a hand. He has been discharged from hospital and is much better. Before the accident he had been told his contract was not being renewed, the post going to a Norwegian.

Chelmsford City manager, Sid Prosser has a long memory where players are concerned. Formerly in charge of Finchley and St. Albans he snapped up Alan Gane, when the player was released by Hertford, for the Southern League club. Alan was with Wycombe Wanderers and Slough before turning professional.

Harlow forward Eddie Sedgewick broke an ankle in their recent match at Finchley and could be out of action for some time. Hendon have persuaded Peter Shreeves to come out of retirement. Peter, whose brother Danny was also with Hendon, played for Finchley and turned professional with Reading. He was on Charlton's coaching staff.

It's cash that counts up North. The Northerners are all out for a share in the Rothmans sportsmanship pool. So much so that Tow Law have released full back Vic Hellier, because he has been cautioned twice, which has cost them two points out of their sportsmanship pool of eight.

Determined to get into the Rothmans Isthmian League, Edmonton-Haringey are to start work on a second stand at their ground, while Letchworth are pressing ahead with the installation of Floodlights. Their deadline is November 20.

It has been a busy week for signings and transfers. Those on the move are: Rothmans Isthmian League: Chris Batchelor, Hayes to Tilbury; Alan Morris, Walthamstow Avenue to Bromley; Chris Brooks, Hertford to Finchley and John Bull, from Bromley to Clapton.

Signings: Clapton have signed Ron Spicer. Wokingham have taken Stewart Lowery, the former Bishop Auckland, Watford, Walsall and South Shields man on a permit. Chesham have signed R.A.F. player Ian Hornby, who has had experience with Scarborough; Bromley have signed Paul Kitson, formerly with Queens Park Rangers, Charlton and Watford, as well as Dave Neville and Alan Charlton; Horsham have signed Derek Brown and John Daubney.

Carshalton have signed Robin Lawrence, ex-Faversham, and Reg Weir. Aveley — Gareth Jones from Llanelli. Kingstonian — Dave Clark, ex-Tooting and Mitcham. Oxford City — John Shufflebottom